

# Obama's Influence Abroad is Evaporating

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

There was once a time, not too long ago, when the U.S. government's ability to steer the policies of other nations was near absolute. A U.S. president needed only to make a public statement denouncing another nation's economic or military policy, and the effects would be instant.

The countries that refused U.S. instructions were labeled pariahs, or enemies, and lumped together under the crosshairs of U.S. foreign policy, liable to attract economic sanctions or military invasion; the leaders of these "bad" governments were inevitably likened to Hitler.

These "axis of evil" type nations were once exceptions, but now appear like trendsetters. The world's "policeman" is seeing its instructions increasingly ignored, while other nations defiantly spit in the cop's face.

But like any officer with a long track record of brutality, the U.S. government will not quietly accept its fate as a second rate power, while the re-shuffling of the new international order will exacerbate global tensions as rising nations compete for influence over poorer countries once loyal to the U.S.

The most palpable sign of U.S. weakness is its policy toward Russia. Obama's State Department promised "painful" sanctions for Russia's policy on Ukraine, but the U.S. hasn't even managed to inflict a bruise. To really "hurt" Russia economically, the U.S. needs its European allies to obey, and they are turning their backs to Obama's anti-Russia plans.

The New York Times [reports](#):

"Not only were they [the G7 nations] unwilling to snub the Russian leader entirely, as Mr. Obama sought, they were also reluctant to go along with other efforts to isolate the Kremlin. Most notably, the French government repeated that it would go ahead with the \$1.6 billion sale of powerful warships to Moscow along with plans to train 400 Russian sailors in France this month. And other European leaders were cautious about setting further red lines threatening additional sanctions against Russia."

The Obama administration was especially vexed by France. After France didn't back down from the arms deal with Russia, the U.S. government [fined France's biggest bank](#) \$10 billion, ostensibly for money laundering.

The Bush-like arrogance it takes for the U.S. to fine an overseas French bank has outraged the French government and public alike, and likely won't make Obama more friends in Europe. But U.S. global domination of the global financial system — because of the U.S. dollar's status as the world's reserve currency — is one of the last forms of U.S. foreign

power, and it too is shrinking.

As France was cursing Obama, another strong European ally, Germany, lashed out, too, by doing the unthinkable and expelling the head of U.S. intelligence (CIA) in Germany. The Huffington Post [commented](#):

“The scandal has chilled relations with Washington to levels not seen since Merkel’s predecessor opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.”

Obama’s power has shrunk to such depths that he can’t politically control Afghanistan, even under the tremendous weight of U.S. military occupation. The recent Afghan election was marred by allegations of fraud — yet again — that threatened to tear the country into even tinier shreds, by ripping the patchwork alliances Obama had sewn together to maintain a semblance of “democracy” within strict pro-U.S. boundaries.

The New York Times gave a [timid explanation of events](#):

“...the United States has far less leverage than it did in 2009. After years of watching American officials fold after being rebuffed by Mr. Karzai, few here give much credence to American threats to pull out troops and cut aid. And each successive crisis over election fraud — this year’s is the third in five years, including the parliamentary elections in 2010 — has diminished the faith of many Afghans in the government erected by the United States.”

In Iraq the vibrant failure of U.S. policy is blinding, itself the partial result of equally brilliant mistakes in Syria. Obama’s influence in Iraq is so weak that the U.S. establishment seems to be leaning towards a complete fragmentation of Iraq, which was their “solution” in Yugoslavia — create smaller, ethnically based nations that are easier to control. Vice President [Joe Biden’s Iraq plan](#) is a huge step in this direction, which Obama seems to be attempting to implement, even though he doesn’t say it out loud.

Obama’s biggest mistake in Syria was perhaps more damaging to U.S. power than his consorting with Gulf state dictators to fund and arm Sunni extremist groups.

When Obama drew a “red line” and told the world that Syria crossed it —[itself a WMD-size lie](#) — but yet did nothing in response, the world took note. A bully is powerful only as long as its threats are backed with consequences, and Obama was unable to “punish” Syria in the same way that it failed to discipline Russia. All of the “allies” Obama summoned to punish Syria realized that Obama wasn’t going to follow through, and thus future alliances will be harder to organize, as is happening now against Russia.

It now seems that Obama is facing an avalanche of impudence where even tiny Bahrain is openly defying the U.S.

The New York Times article on the subject was “[Bahrain’s Bad Decision](#)”:

“Bahrain would seem an unlikely country to expel a senior American diplomat on a trumped-up complaint, since the Persian Gulf state is home to the United States Navy’s Fifth Fleet and depends on America for its defense, especially against Iran. Yet the government did just that...”

“These outrageous moves call into question Bahrain’s commitment to its alliance with the United States...So far, the Obama administration, which has worked to maintain ties with the monarchy despite human rights concerns, has responded weakly. It must go further to show that such behavior is unacceptable.”

As more nations question U.S. authority, they’ll gravitate towards other countries — Russia and China, etc. — that have more to offer than threats, spying, and weapons sales. It’s inevitable that the above process of deteriorating U.S. power will continue, but what’s questionable is how far the U.S. government will go in response. Super powers do not relinquish their status — which is extremely profitable for the big U.S. corporations — without a fight.

As the U.S. government resorts to its trump card of military intervention to maintain its foreign power, working people in the U.S. will raise increased demands to use the hundreds of billions of annual tax payer dollars to instead fund schools, health care, infrastructural projects, and the rest of long-neglected U.S. civil society.

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